

WORLD TRADE ORGANIZATION

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Committee on Regional Trade Agreements

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FREE TRADE AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE CZECH REPUBLIC AND THE REPUBLIC OF BULGARIA

The following communication, dated 5 May 1997, has been received from the Permanent Mission of the Czech Republic with the request that it be circulated to the WTO Members.

I have the honour to transmit herewith, in accordance with Article XXIV:7(a) of the General Agreement, the text of a Free Trade Agreement between the Czech Republic and the Republic of Bulgaria with the annexes and protocols which form an integral part thereof.¹

The Free Trade Agreement was signed on 15 December 1995, was applied provisionally since 1 January 1996 and entered into force on 7 June 1996.

The Agreement aims at the progressive establishment of a free-trade area between the Parties in the sense of Article XXIV of the General Agreement. The free-trade area will be established over a transitional period ending on 1 January 1998, when duties and other restrictive regulations of commerce will have been abolished on substantially all the trade between the signatories.

The Free Trade Agreement between the Czech Republic and the Republic of Bulgaria also contains provisions dealing with, *inter alia*, state aid, competition, public procurement and intellectual property rights. An evolutionary clause offers the possibility of extending the Agreement to areas not covered by it.

¹The text of the Agreement is being circulated as WT/REG41/1. The Annexes and Protocols have been submitted to the Secretariat for consultation by interested Members (Office 3006).